

ACT NO. 7767

BILL NO. 31-0222

THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Regular Session

2015

An Act amending title 33 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 111, section 3018 pertaining to the Agriculture Revolving Fund; section 3072 pertaining to the Tourism Advertising Revolving Fund; and section 54(b)(1) paragraphs (1) and (2) pertaining to the Hotel Room Tax and the Time-Share Estate Tax respectively

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WHEREAS, the District of St. Croix has a long history and tradition of farming and local agriculture and food production; and

WHEREAS, the preservation and expansion of locally produced agricultural products in the Territory continues to be a high priority objective; and

WHEREAS, in today's technology-driven world there is a growing trend and movement toward locally sourced, fresh seasonal ingredients for consumers and chefs throughout the country known as "the farm-to-table movement"; and

WHEREAS, the availability of standard and specialized machinery, equipment, vehicles and supplies for agricultural use is required to assist local farmers in developing their land, facilitating the preservation and expansion of locally produced agricultural products and the distribution of such agricultural products in the Territory; and

WHEREAS, the Territory receives over \$8.5 million dollars for the school lunch program in the V.I. Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, the Territory has developed a strategy to establish a farm-to-table school lunch program, giving the Territory access to additional federal funding; and

WHEREAS, the Agriculture Revolving Fund has been created to provide a source of funding to assist in meeting the critical needs of local farmers in the Territory and the Territory's demand for "farm-to-table" produce; and

WHEREAS, the Territory's schools, senior centers and tourism industry would be served by the use of fresh and locally grown agricultural produce; Now, Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. Title 33 Virgin Islands Code, section 3018, subsection (c) is amended by striking "Economic Development and" and at the end of the subsection by adding phrase that reads: "Not less than \$1,000,000 from the Tourism Advertising Revolving Fund annually deposited by June 30th of each year".

SECTION 2. Title 33 Virgin Islands Code, section 3018, is amended in subsection (d) by striking "Economic Development and" by adding a sentence at the end of the subsection which reads as follows: No more than 10 percent of the Agriculture Revolving Fund may be used for administrative purposes."

SECTION 3. Title 33 Virgin Islands Code, section 54 is amended in the following instances:

(a) Subsection (b) is amended in paragraph (1) by striking "10 percent " and inserting "12.5 percent" and in paragraph (2) by striking "8 percent" and inserting "10.5 percent"; and

(b) Subsection (e) is amended by striking all of the language after the first occurrence of "section " and inserting as new language that reads as follows: "as provided in this section":

(1) At the beginning of each fiscal year, the funds collected under subsection (b)(1) must be deposited into the Tourism Advertising Revolving Fund established pursuant to section 3072 of this title; except that

(A) not less than \$1,000,000 must be deposited into the Agriculture Revolving Fund established pursuant to section 3018 of this title no later than June 30th of each year;

(B) not less than \$1,000,000 must be used for the development and promotion of sports tourism;

(C) not less than \$500,000 must be transferred to the Department of Education for inter-scholastic competitions of Virgin Islands public high school athletes in games on St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John, the British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico; and

(D) not less than \$500,000 must be used by the Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation for recreation and sports activity programs,

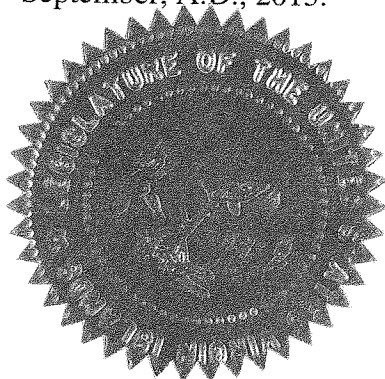
(2) At the beginning of each fiscal year, the funds collected under subsection (b)(2) must be deposited into the Tourism Advertising Revolving Fund established under section 3072 of this title for the following purposes:

- (1) 25% for advertising the Virgin Islands;
- (2) 25% for exclusively advertising the island of St. John;
- (3) 25% for exclusively advertising the island of St. Croix;
- (4) 25% for exclusively advertising the marine industry of the Virgin Islands.

SECTION 4. Section 3 takes effect January 1, 2016.

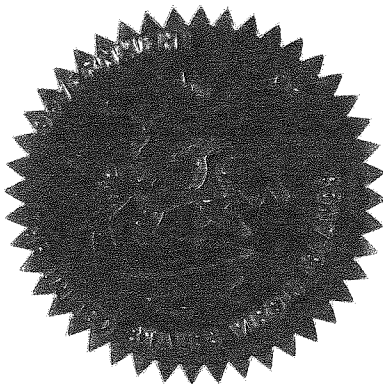
Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on September 23, 2015.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 29th Day of September, A.D., 2015.



Neville James
Neville James
President

Myron D. Jackson
Myron D. Jackson
Legislative Secretary



Bill No. 31-0222 is hereby approved.

Witness my hand and the Seal of the
Government of the United States
Virgin Islands at Charlotte Amalie,
St. Thomas, this 11th day October A.D.,
2015.

Kenneth E. Mapp
Kenneth E. Mapp
Governor